

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:
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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

(PCT Rule 43bis.1)

8.18.04

Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

17. 8. 2004

FOR FURTHER ACTION

See paragraph 2 below

Applicant's or agent's file reference

R04089PCT

International application No.

PCT/JP2004/006204

International filing date (day/month/year)

28.04.2004

Priority date (day/month/year)

02.05.2003

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC

Int.Cl' **B41J2/045**

Applicant

RICOH COMPANY, LTD.

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- Box No. II Priority
- Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA") except that this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of 3 months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA/JP	Authorized officer	2P	8306
Japan Patent Office	MASATO ONAKA		
3-4-3, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8915, Japan			Telephone No. +81-3-3581-1101 Ext. 3221

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.

PCT/JP2004/006204

Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the language, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language _____, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).

2. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:

a. type of material

a sequence listing
 table(s) related to the sequence listing

b. format of material

in written format
 in computer readable form

c. time of filing/furnishing

contained in the international application as filed.
 filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
 furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.

3. In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.

4. Additional comments:

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

International application No.
PCT/JP2004/ 006204

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	2 - 10	YES
	Claims	1	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims		YES
	Claims	1 - 10	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1 - 10	YES
	Claims		NO

2. Citations and explanations

D1:JP 8-58087 A(RICOH COMPANY, LTD.)
D2:JP 2002-36537 A(RICOH COMPANY, LTD.)

The subject matter of claim 1 does not appear to be novel with respect to D1. D1 discloses an image forming apparatus comprising: an ejection head to eject a liquid droplet from a nozzle to form an image on a medium; a driving signal generating unit configured to generate a driving signal having a waveform that causes the ejection head to operate at a driving frequency other than the natural frequency of the ejection head.

The subject matter of claims 2 does not appear to involve an inventive step in view of D1 and D2. D2 discloses an image forming apparatus, wherein the driving signal generating unit produces the driving signal including a non-ejecting pulse that produces energy for not ejecting the droplet.

The subject matter of claims 3-10 is mere matter of design variation.